

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 EB-11 RSC-01 DRC-01 /028 W

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R 311115Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9327

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, BGEN, AF

SUBJ: MAJOR PROJECTS: LOGAR FIC, MINISTRY OF PUBLIC

WORKS CONSULTANCY, HELMAND VALLEY ROAD

REF: STATE 188099

1. EMBASSY APPRECIATES DEPARTMENT'S CONCERN RE POSSIBLE FAVORITISM SHOWN ONE US FIRM OVER ANOTHER AND WISHES DIS-ABUSE DEPT OF NOTION THIS IS CURRENT EMBASSY PRACTICE.

2. IN ACCORDANCE WELL-ESTABLISHED USG PROGRAM TO PROMOTE EXPORTS OF US PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, EMBASSY HAS ABANDONED TRADITIONAL TALLEYRAND DIPLOMATIC CAUTION AND IN COMMERCIAL FIELD IS PURSUING EVERY POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL OPPORTUNITY WITH UNPRECEDENTED ZEAL.

3. PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE WITH AWARDING OF LOGAR AIRPORT FEASIBILITY SURVEY CONTRACT SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY KEEP AS MANY US FIRMS AS POSSIBLE IN THE COMMERCIAL RUNNING IN HOPES THAT A US FIRM MIGHT WIN OUT OVER ANY NUMBER OF FOREIGN FIRMS, MANY OF WHOM ARE RUMORED TO HAVE THEIR GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL BACKING IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO WIN COMMERCIAL BID OPPORTUNITIES. WHEN AFGHAN AIR AUTHORITY EXPRESSED FERVENT DESIRE FOR ITT IN FINAL LIST OF BIDDERS, EMBASSY THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT NOTIFY ITT OF THIS DESIRE AND ENSURE THEY WERE GIVEN EVERY OPPORTUNITY PARTICIPATE IN WHAT COULD TURN OUT TO BE VERY LUCRATIVE CONTRACT.

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4. DEPT IS CORRECT IN ASSUMING THAT EMBASSY MIGHT NOT RPT NOT BE AWARE THAT ITT COULD SUPPLY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES

FROM OTHER THAN STATE-SIDE SOURCES; HOWEVER, EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT GIVEN SOME OF OVERSEAS SUBSIDIARIES OF OTHER US BIDDERS IT QUITE POSSIBLE THEY TOO WOULD SUPPLY FROM OVERSEAS HOLDINGS SHOULD THEY BE SUCESSFUL IN BIDDING. TO ELIMINATE ONLY NAMES OF US FIRMS SUBMITTING BIDS FROM LIST OF BIDDERS SENT TO ITT WOULD BE MISLEADING TO US FIRMS. ALSO, ITT REP WAS INFORMED BY AFGHAN AIR AUTHORITY REP THAT US FIRM WILCOX HAD VISITED AAA AND INTENDED TO FILE FOR INCLUSION ON SHORT LIST. THERE POSSIBILITY OF CONSOLIDATED BID FOR LARGER PROJECTS AMONG US FIRMS WHICH SEEMS MORE PROBABLE IF ALL RPT ALL US FIRMS KNOW WHO HAS SUBMITTED BIDS.

5. IN SUMMARY, EMBASSY'S ZEAL IN PURSUING THIS COMMERCIAL OFFER WAS AND IS DIRECTED TO ALL RPT ALL US FIRMS WHO WILL CONTINUE RECEIVE CAREFUL ATTENTION OF EMBASSY COMMERCIAL SECTION TO ANY AND ALL THEIR REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE.

6. RE QUESTION OF SENDING INFORMATION CABLES DIRECTLY TO US FIRMS WITH INFO COPIES TO USOC AND SECSTATE, EMBASSY THOUGHT IT WAS FOLLOWING DEPARTMENT'S DICTATES AS OUTLINED IN A-5086, DATED 24 JUNE 1974. EMBASSY PLEADS GUILTY TO INFRACTION OF SPIRIT IF NOT LETER OF DEPARTMENT'S INSTRUCTIONS IN INCLUDING INFO INTENDED FOR DEPT ONLY IN CABLE SENT TO US FIRM. THAT INFO SHOULD HAVE BEEN SENT IN SEPARATE MESSAGE TO DEPT.

7. DURING CONSULTATIONS BY EMBASSY ECONOMIC COUNSELOR WITH TAMS IN NEW YORK THIS SUMMER, THAT FIRM SHOWED EMOFF ELABORATE PREPARATIONS IT HAD MADE FOR BIDDING ON HELMAND VALLEY ROAD PROJECT IN AFGHANISTAN AND INDICATED LACK OF KNOWLEDGE THAT INITIAL SURVEY CONTRACT HAD BEEN AWARDED TO ITALIAN FIRM. IN EFFORT ELIMINATE THAT INFORMATION GAP AND KEEP TAMS IN RUNNING FOR MAJOR EXPORT PROJECTS IN AFGHANISTAN, EMBASSY INFORMED THEM DIRECTLY SINCE THEY WERE ONE US FIRM WHICH SHOWED KEEN AND DIRECT INTEREST IN CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS IN AFGHANISTAN.

8. IN FUTURE, EMBASSY WILL ENDEAVOR KEEP INFO INTENDED FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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DEPT ONLY OUT OF MESSAGES REPEATED TO US FIRMS. IN MEAN-TIME, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE CLARIFICATION OF DEPARTMENT AND USDOC INSTRUCTIONS RE INFORMING US FIRMS DIRECTLY OF MEANINGFUL BID OPPORTUNITIES IN LIGHT SEEMING CONTRADICTION BETWEEN REFTEL AND DEPARTMENT'S A-5086.

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